



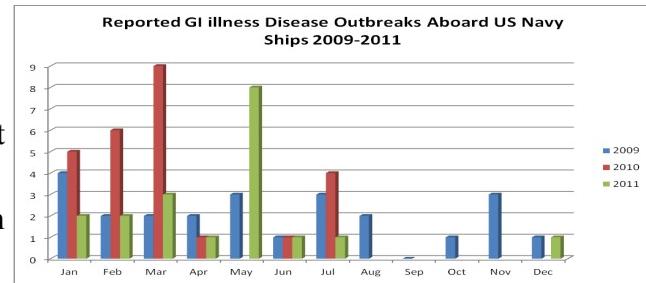
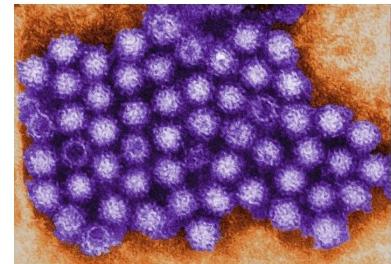
Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center "Quick Hits"



July 2012

Norovirus Illnesses in the Fleet

Noroviruses (NoVs) are highly infectious viruses that one can acquire from infected persons, contaminated food/water, or from touching contaminated surfaces. Noroviruses (NoVs) are the predominant cause of gastro-intestinal (GI) outbreaks worldwide, and illnesses from it are the most costly, pathogen-known, food-related illness in the U.S. in terms of the number of cases occurring and the number of hospitalizations. According to the US CDC NoVs cause over 21 million cases and 70,000 hospitalizations each year, and are estimated to be responsible for approximately 50% of all reported GI illness outbreaks based on studies from the U.S. and Europe. The highly infectious nature of this virus poses a significant threat to military force health and especially to those populations living in close quarters aboard ship or in training populations. In fact norovirus caused illnesses are believed to be the single-most important cause of disease-outbreak related morbidity aboard ships in the U.S. Navy. Medical surveillance estimates from the Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center indicate that there may have been as many as 80 outbreaks of GI illnesses attributable to NoV infections that have caused roughly 6000 unique health care visits to our ship's medial departments during the 24 month period from 01 Jan 2009 to 31 Dec 2010.



Prevention, Response and Reporting

- ▶ Preventing Norovirus illnesses requires effective hand hygiene, adherence to [food safety](#) and [water sanitation standards](#), and proper cleaning and disinfection of potentially contaminated surfaces.
- ▶ Noroviruses are very difficult to kill in the environment and are highly infectious—thus the need for significant and effective sanitation measures.
- ▶ [Related technical guidance](#) that is specific to Navy shipboard environments has been prepared by the Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center.
- ▶ Any DON health care providers who diagnose a patient with a illnesses caused by a NoV is required to report cases as directed in [BUMEDINST 6220.12C](#).
- ▶ Contact your local preventive medicine personnel for assistance with reporting guidance.

POC and Links

- NMCPHC Homepage: <http://www.nmcphc.med.navy.mil/>
- DRSI: http://www.nmcphc.med.navy.mil/Preventive_Medicine/Disease_Surveillance/med_event_reporting.aspx
- NMCPHC Preventive Medicine: http://www.nmcphc.med.navy.mil/Preventive_Medicine/
- NEPMU2 Norfolk, VA: NEPMU2NorfolkThreatAssessment@med.navy.mil
- NEPMU5 San Diego, CA: ThreatAssessment@med.navy.mil
- NEPMU6 Pearl Harbor, HI: NEPMU6Threatassessment@med.navy.mil